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A N

E S S A Y

ON THE

Power of N U M B E R S,

AND THE

Principles of H A R M O N Y

I N

POETICAL COMPOSITIONS.

The Second Edition.

R

By John Maſon, A. M.

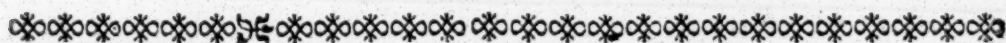
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A N
E S S A Y
O N T H E
Power of Numbers, &c.



C H A P I.

The Introduction.

I T is a Question which, I think, hath never yet been decided with due Precision, 'What is the Cause and Source of that 'Pleasure which, in reading either Poetry or Prose, we perceive, not only 'from the Sound and Sense of the 'Words, but from the Order in which they are disposed?' Or, 'Why a Sentence, conveying just the 'same Thought, and containing the very same Words, 'should afford the Ear a greater Pleasure when expressed one Way, than it does when expressed another? though the Difference perhaps may arise only 'from

‘ from the Transposition of a single Word.’ The Truth of this Observation is plain enough ; but the Ground or Reason of it, I apprehend, is little understood.

That there is a Harmony and Sweetness in Verse superior to that of Prose, arising from a skilful Order and Disposition of the Words, is universally known : But (which is not so commonly observed) there is the same Difference of Harmony, arising from the same Cause, even in Prose itself ; some Periods being smooth and flowing, whilst others are harsh and disagreeable.

Now the Harmony of Prose arises from the same Principle with that which constitutes the Harmony of Verse, *viz.* Numbers ; or such a Disposition of the Words, as throws them into just metrical Feet ; but very different from those which constitute any Species of Verse. But though they cannot be reduced to exact Rule, as poetical Measures may, and we are not so scrupulously attentive to them in writing Prose as we are in writing Verse, yet they are by no Means to be wholly disregarded ; and till we have learned the Art of harmonizing Prose, a good Ear will be the best Guide and Judge.

What I intend then in these Essays, is a particular Examination of the numerical Structure both in *Verse* and *Prose* ; the Source from whence their respective Harmony springs. The latter is the Subject of the second Essay, the former of this : which is an Enquiry into the Principles of Harmony in *Poetical Compositions* ; as necessary to clear the Ground and prepare the Way for the other, which will be of more extensive Use.

I shall

I shall only further observe, that as these Kind of Disquisitions are not very common, and to many Readers entirely new, though I have endeavoured to make them as plain as possible, yet after all, some things require a pretty close application of mind to enter into the true Sense, Taste and Spirit of them. But, if I may judge by my own Experience, the Pleasure will be proportioned to the Pains, and more than recompence all the Reader's Attention and Care to understand them.

C H A P. II.

The Division of the Subject.

IN Order therefore to investigate the Principles of Harmony in Poetical Numbers, it is necessary that we attend to the several Things that enter into the Construction of English Verse ; which are these following.

- I. TIMES.
- II. SYLLABLES.
- III. FEET.
- IV. MEASURES.

And each of these in Quantity consists of a Combination of those Movements, which, separately taken, are of a shorter Duration. Thus for Instance, a double Time makes the Quantity of a long Syllable ; a Combination of Syllables makes a Foot ; a Combination of Feet, a Measure ; and the Measures make the Verse. Therefore as the Verse is made up of Measures,

Measures, Measures of Feet, Feet of Syllables, and Syllables of Times ; so a Verse is ultimately made up of a certain determinate Number of Times, according to the particular Metre or Species of the Verse. Thus a pure *Iambic* Verse of six Syllables contains in it nine *Times* ; e. g.

I lift my Heart to Thee.

One of eight Syllables, twelve *Times* ; e. g.

Adore the Pow'r that spread the Skies.

And one of ten Syllables, fifteen *Times* ; e. g.

Remember Man that Virtue makes thy Bliss.

I shall speak of each of these Parts of a Verse distinctly.

C H A P. III.

Of Times and Quantities.

THE shortest Poetical Movement is a *Time*.
This is either *single* or *double*.

The Measure of a *single Time* is the Space in which we commonly pronounce any of the Liquids or Consonants, preceded by a Vowel ; e. g. *an, of, it, in* ; and is generally distinguished by this Mark [-], and sometimes by this Musical Note [♢].

But here we must except the [z], which naturally produces the Sound too much to be comprized in a *single Time* ; e. g. *uz*, and also the soft [s], which hath the

the same Sound with the [z]; especially when it comes between two Vowels; e. g. *these, chuse*; and when it denotes the Plural Number of Nouns; as *Sins, Ways, Strangers*; and the third Person singular in Verbs; as *he loves, grows, admires (a)*.

However by Use and Custom, and the Order of the Accent (which is the most general Rule in this Case) the (s) even in its soft or liquid Sound (that is, when pronounced like the (z)) often passes in Verse for a short Time, though it be naturally a long one; e. g. in the Particles, *as, is, &c.*

A *double Time* consists of two short ones; and is generally marked thus [-], or distinguished by a *Semi-breve*, thus [◊]. And the Measure of it is the Space of time in which we ordinarily pronounce any Vowel immediately followed by two or more Consonants, as *ask, end, arms*.

But here likewise it must be observed that Custom and Accent often make these kind of Syllables short which are naturally long, or contract a double Time into a single one. e. g.

Tb' Infernal Serpent; He it was whose Guile.

Here the Syllables *In, nal, pent, whose*, which are naturally long, are all short by Accent; and the Pronoun *He*, which is naturally short, is here by the same Authority long.

Indeed strictly speaking there is a Difference in the single Times, some being shorter and some longer; as there is also in the double Times, some of them being in reality, and in length of Pronunciation, more
than

(a) See *Say's Essay on the Harmony, &c. of Numbers*, p. 103.

than two of the single or short ones (*b*). But this Difference is not considerable enough to make any great alteration in the Harmony of Numbers.

Nay from this Diversity in the Quantities of the long and short Times, there arises this double Advantage, *viz.* that two of these very short Times may be substituted for one ; and one very long may be put for three short ones ; and that without any Detriment to the Measure. A few Instances of which I shall hereafter produce.

C H A P. IV.

Of Syllables.

THE next Thing to be considered in Verse is the *Syllables*.

Every Syllable consists of a short or a long Time. And in Order to determine the particular Quantity of any Syllable, the following Rules may be observed.

(1.) Every Syllable terminated by a single Consonant, and on which there lies neither Accent nor Emphasis, is generally short.

(2.) Though a Syllable be naturally short, yet if it be accented in the ordinary Way of Pronunciation, or the Sense requires it to be read with an Emphasis, it becomes a long Quantity. *e. g.*

Ungrateful Man ! How can you serve me so !

Here

(*b*) The same Thing is observable in the Latin Quantities, as well as the English ; and is remarked by *Quintilian*. *Et longis longiores, et brevibus sunt breviores Syllabæ.* *Quint. lib. ix. cap. 4.*

Here the Accent naturally falls upon the Word *can*, and makes it long. At other times it is short. *e. g.*

How great his Power is none can tell.

(3.) A Syllable ending with two or more Consonants is naturally long ; as *self*, *strength*, *Health*. But this is often over-ruled by the Accent, as may be seen above.

(4.) All Diphthongs are naturally long. But in English Numbers they are often short ; especially if they come immediately before or after the accented or emphatical Word. *e. g.*

*Pleas'd thou shalt hear and learn the secret Power
Of Harmony.*

In the first Line though the second Syllable *thou* be a Diphthong, yet coming immediately after the emphatical Word *pleas'd*, the Sound is short. Therefore

(*Lastly*) That which principally fixes and determines the Quantities in English Numbers is the Accent and Emphasis, and the common manner of Pronunciation by these, as used by the best Masters of the English Language.

C H A P. V.

The Rule for determining the Quantities of English Numbers.

BY Quantity I mean that Space of Time, whether long or short, in which any Syllable is pronounced ; which in English Numbers is determined almost altogether by the Accent.

B

If

If it be said, that among the Antients the Accent and Quantity were two different Things ; that the Accent denoted the Sound of the Voice, and the Quantity the Length of the Time. Be it so, (though by the Way it will be found extremely difficult to read any Greek Author by this Rule) yet I would fain know by what Principles we are obliged or even allowed to observe any such Rule in the Pronunciation of English ; which is a Language of a very different Genius, and admits of a much greater Latitude in its Quantities than either the Latin or the Greek. And that it is impossible any such Distinction between the Accents and Quantities can be observed in reading English, whether Poetry or Prose, any one may presently be convinced by making the Experiment.

The Truth is, there is a very wide Difference between the Latin and English *Profody*. And it is in vain to think of introducing the Rules of the former into the latter ; since the English Language is not so framed as to admit of it. This is very plain to those who compare the Profody of the two Languages ; wherein they cannot avoid observing how essentially they contradict each other. For Instance, one Vowel before another in English is often long, in Latin almost always short. A Vowel before two Consonants in English is often short, in Latin always long. And Diphthongs which are always long in the Latin are often short in the English Tongue.

And yet to assert (as some have done) that we have therefore no certain determinate Quantities in our Language, is to sap the very Foundation of all English Verse ; which is made up of Measures, as
they

they are of Feet, which depend upon the determinate Quantities of the Syllables, whether long or short. But if we have no such determinate Quantities, we can have no certain Feet, consequently no just Measures, and therefore no Verse.

The proper Accent and Emphasis then is the chief Rule that determines the English Quantities. And it is a Rule not only more general, but more certain and unexceptionable than those that are introduced into the antient *Profodia*. For common Use and Custom (*Quem penes Arbitrium est et Jus et Norma loquendi*) will never fail to determine the Accent, and the Sense of the Period when understood, will always point out the Emphasis; and where the Accent or Emphasis is thus directed to fall, that Syllable (be its natural Quantity what it will) is in that Place considered as long; and those Syllables that have neither Accent nor Emphasis are considered as short (*c*).

Here then we have a certain Rule or Standard whereby to measure and determine English Numbers, to which we find all our best English Poets exactly conform. But if, after all, some will insist that Accent is not the Quantity in English Numbers, or if it be, it is no proper Rule in this Case; I would ask, where

B 2

they

(*c*) What hath caused our Measures to be so little attended to, I suppose, is the Uncertainty in the Quantity of the greatest Part of our Syllables. — However all our Syllables are not promiscuous. Trissino, a famous Italian Poet, and an early Writer on the Measures of their Verse, lays down this Rule; that as the antient Feet were determined by the Quantity of the Syllables only, in his Language they are determined by the Accent. This is equally true in our Tongue; and for this Reason, that whereas the antient Accent is represented to be only a Variation in the Tone of the Voice, and had no Relation to the Quantity of the Syllable, ours is constantly attended with an Emphasis, which implies greater Length in the Syllable.

Pemberton's Observat. on Poetry. p. 125.

they can find another ; and what they imagine then to be the Foundation of our Measures, or in what manner they will account for the Harmony of English Verse ?

I have dwelt the longer upon this, because it is in the Case before us a fundamental Point ; and a Principle on which depends all the Harmony of modern Numbers, not only in English but French, and I believe every living Language in *Europe*. But which nevertheless, some Men of considerable Name, through a fond Attachment to the Antients have denied ; who would fain adapt the antient Prosody to modern Poetry ; without sufficiently considering the different Genius of Languages, and consequently the different Laws and Rules to which they are respectively subject. And to think that the Construction of English Verse depends on the same Rules as were adapted to the Latin, is much about as sensible as to imagine that because my own Coat fits me very well, therefore it will fit every other Person of whatever Shape or Size he be.

That learned Critic *Isaac Vossius* was of this Sentiment : whose Authority perhaps hath countenanced others in the same. For contrary to the known Rule, that Modesty is one of the best Marks of a true Critic, he hath (in his Book *de Poematum cantu et viribus Rhythmi*) boldly affirmed, *that we have no Rhythm at all in our Poetry. That we mind nothing but to have such a Number of Syllables in a Verse, of whatever Nature, and in whatever Order. — That there is nothing but Confusion of Quantities in the modern Odes. — That the Moderns have no Regard to the natural Quantity of Syllables ; and have introduced an unnatural*

tural and barbarous Variety of long and short Notes, without any Regard to the Subject and Sense of the Verse, or the natural Pronunciation. This is a heavy Charge indeed ; but Part of it hath been already confuted, and the rest will be hereafter considered. In the mean time I shall leave him to the just Animadversions of Mr. Malcolm (d).

C H A P. VI.

Of the several Kinds of Feet.

THE next Thing to be considered in the Construction of Verse is the FEET.

These are indifferently called *Rhythms*, *Numbers* or *Feet*. *Rhythms* from the Greek Word ῥυθμός (e), because of their equable Fluency. *Numbers*, because they are made up of a certain Number of Times. And *Feet*, because upon these the Verse runs (f).

Hence

(d) See Malcolm's Treatise of Musick, p. 61, et seq.

(e) A ῥυθμὸς vel ῥέω fluere.

(f) The Antients seem to have used the Word *Rhythmus* in a very lax and indefinite Sense. (1.) Sometimes they fixed to it the very same Idea as I do here ; viz. that of a Foot, of whatever Kind or Species it be, thus *Dionysius* expressly, τὸ δ' αὐτὸ καλῶ πόδα καὶ ῥυθμὸν. *De Structura Orat.* Sect. xvii. Init. And *Aristides*, ῥυθμὸς τοίνυν ἐστὶ σύστημα ἐκ χρόνων κατὰ τινὰ τάξιν συγκειμένων. *Arist. de Musica.* l. 1. p. 31. Rhythm is a System of Times put together in a certain Order. But (2.) At other times they denote by this Word not the same Order, but the same Quantity of Times. For Instance, the *Dactyl* and the *Anapæst* (— ∪ ∪ —) are the same Rhythm, because they each consist of four Times. So *Quintilian*, *Rhythmi, id est, Numeri SPATIO Temporum constant.* *De Inst. Orat.* l. ix. c. 4. p. 479. (3.) Sometimes by the Word *Rhythmus* they meant the Measure, or a Number of Movements agreeably united, of which the Ear is to be the Judge. So *Cicero*, *Quicquid est enim quod sub Aurium Mensuram aliquam cadit, etiam si abest a Versu, Numerus vocatur, qui Græcè ῥυθμὸς dicitur.* *Cicero de Orat.*

Hence is derived our English Word *Rhime*, an Expression of a very different Idea, denoting the similar Sounds at the End of the metrical Lines ; one of the lowest Ornaments and greatest Shackles in modern Poesy.

But the Word *Rhime* is sometimes used in the same Sense as *Rhythmus*, from whence it is derived, to signify *metrical Numbers*. In this Sense *Milton* evidently useth it in the Beginning of his *Paradise lost* ; where he proposes to sing of

Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime.

i. e. in Prose or Verse (g).

Words may be considered either as Signs of Ideas to convey the Sense of an Author, or as simple Sounds to adorn his Stile. This latter when apply'd to Verse is called the mechanic Part of Poetry. The Design of which is only to please the Ear with the harmonious Sound of Words, whilst the Sense of them affects the Heart.

Some Words are observed to be more easily pronounced than others, and consequently are more pleasing to the Ear. For the more difficult the Pronunciation of any Word is, the more disagreeable its Sound. Now in consideration of this, Attempts were

(g) The very learned Dr. *Bentley* taking the Word *Rhime* here in the vulgar Sense, supposes a Corruption in the Text ; and is for having it *Prose or Song* instead of *Prose or Rhime*. For (says he) it is very odd that *Milton* should put *RHIME* here as equivalent to *VERSE*, who had just before (i. e. in his Preface which was writ after) declared against *Rhime* as no true Ornament to good Verse. But it is much more odd that this very thing could not convince the Critic, that his Author did not take the Word *Rhime*, in the modern but the antient Sense, to signify *Numbers* or *Verse*, especially as he sets it in Opposition to *Prose*. An Author stands a bad Chance that falls into the hands of a Critic who first mistakes and then mangles him. See *Bentley's* Edit. of *Milton*, in loco.

were made to bring these Sounds into Order, and reduce them to Rules. Hence arose the Laws of the Rhythmus; and Rules were presently invented, by which the Feet were limited to a certain Number of Syllables; and the Quantity of every Syllable was determined.

These Rules are nothing else in Fact than the Observations and Practice of the best Poets, reduced to Method. Men began to make Verses, as *Quintilian* observes, before there were any Rules to direct them. The first Essays were made without consulting any other Rule than the Ear. And their Reflections and Observations on those Verses which ran and closed in a pleasing manner, and on such as had a disagreeable Movement and Cadence, were the first Origin of the Laws of Versification (*b*). Hence a certain number of Syllables of such a Duration and Quantity, was called such a Rhythm, or metrical Foot.

Now these *metrical Feet* are of three Kinds; which from the number of Syllables they contain, are distinguished into *Dissyllable*, *Trissyllable*, and *Tetrassyllable* Feet.

(1.) The most common and simple Feet are those which are composed of two Syllables. And as these two Syllables may be both long, or both short, or the first long and the second short, or the first short and the second long, so this different Position of the Quantities will produce *four* different Kinds of Feet. The Names and Times of which are as follow.

Spondee - - compound.

Pyrrhic

(*b*) See *Abbe du Bos*'s critical Reflections on Poetry and Painting, p. 261.

<i>Pyrrhic</i>	υ υ	in a.
<i>Trochee</i>	- υ	Monſter.
<i>Iambic</i>	υ -	Remark.

I have exemplified the *Pyrrhic*, which contains two ſhort Times, by two ſhort Monosyllables, becauſe every Word of two Syllables hath in the Pronunciation an Accent upon one of them, and in Engliſh Metre every accented Syllable is long ; and therefore no Engliſh Word of two Syllables can properly exemplify the Times of a *Pyrrhic* Foot, which conſiſts of two ſhort ones.

(2.) The next Kind of Feet are thoſe of three Syllables. Of theſe there are eight in Number, viz.

<i>Trybrachys</i>	υ υ υ	be it a.
<i>Bacchic</i>	υ - -	becometh.
<i>Amphibrachys</i>	υ - υ	rejected.
<i>Anapæſt</i>	υ υ -	diſappoint.
<i>Moloffus</i>	υ - -	underſtand.
<i>Dactyl</i>	- υ υ	Slavery.
<i>Cretic</i>	- υ -	Advocate.
<i>Palimbacchic</i>	- - υ	Almighty.

(3.) There

(3.) There are other Feet of four Syllables ; called by the Antients *Dipodes* or double Feet, because they are compounded of two disyllable Feet. And as the disyllable Feet are four ; and any two of them joined together in a different Position make a different tetrasyllable Foot, the Number of these Feet then must of consequence be sixteen. Because the Order or Position of the four disyllable Feet, when any two of them are joined, may be varied just so many times and no more. For which ever two of them you join together, or in what ever Order, that Conjunction will constitute one of these tetrasyllable Feet. As appears from the following Table.

Let the *Pyrrhic* stand first, and in that Place all the possible Variations it can make with the disyllable Feet are these.

1. *Proseleusmatic*. Double Pyrrhic $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$ let it be a.
 2. *third Pæon*. Pyrrhic and Trochee $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$ alabaster.
 3. *fourth Pæon*. Pyrrhic and Iambic $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$ mal a propos.
 4. *Ionic a minore*. Pyrrhic and Spondee $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$ malefactor.
- The *Iambic* first.
5. *Diambic*. Double Iambic $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$ abominate.
 6. *second Pæon*. Iambic and Pyrrhic $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$ immutable.
 7. *Antipast*. Iambic and Trochee $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$ renunciation.
 8. *first Epitrite*. Iambic and Spondee $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}$ everlasting.

The *Spondee* first.

9. *Dispondee*. Double Spondee ---- understanding. - - - -
 10. *Ionic a majore*. Spondee & Pyrrhic ---- cælestial. - - - -
 11. *3d. Epitrite*. Spondee & Iambic ---- immaculate. - - - -
 12. *4th. Epitrite*. Spondee & Trochee ---- unconvinced. - - - -

The *Trochee* first.

13. *Dichorée*. Double Trochee ---- accidental. - - - -
 14. *Choriambic*. Trochee & Iambic ---- nevertheless. - - - -
 15. *first Pæon*. Trochee and Pyrrhic ---- miserable. - - - -
 16. *2d. Epitrite*. Trochee & Spondee ---- independant. - - - -

Now beside these, the Antients mention other Numbers, compounded of six or eight Syllables, which they call *Prosodiacs* (*i*) ; of which *Plutarch* tells us *Archilochus* was supposed to be the Author (*k*). A useless Invention, and contrary to St. *Austin's* Rule, who says a Foot ought not to exceed four Syllables (*l*).

When any Dipody or tetrasyllable Rhythm is compounded of two dissimilar Feet, that they called a *Syzygy* (*m*). Thus a *Choriambic* (----), *Antipast* (----), *Ionic a majore* (----), *Ionic a minore* (----) were called *Syzygies* ; because they joined together

(*i*) See *Manuvaring's* Stichology, ch. 2.

(*k*) *Plutarch* of Musick. See his *Morals*, Vol. i. p. 117.

(*l*) *Div. Aurel. Augustin.* de Musicâ, l. iii. c. 5, 6.

(*m*) Vid. *Aristid.* de Music, l. i. p. 36.

together two Feet of contrary and opposite Movements.

As a Foot of four Syllables is only two disyllable Feet joined together, so a Foot of three Syllables is composed of one disyllable Foot, and half another of equal Times. But as there are but two disyllable Feet that are composed of equal Times, *viz.* the *Pyrrhic* and *Spondee*, therefore every Foot of three Syllables consists of a disyllable Foot and half a *Pyrrhic* or *Spondee* added to it. *e. g.*

<i>Trybrachys</i>	---	is a	<i>Pyrrhic</i>	--	and half	<i>Pyrrhic</i>	..
<i>Dactyl</i>	---		<i>Trochee</i>	--	and half	<i>Pyrrhic</i>	..
<i>Amphibrachys</i>	---		<i>Iambic</i>	--	and half	<i>Pyrrhic</i>	..
<i>Palimbacchic</i>	---		<i>Spondee</i>	--	and half	<i>Pyrrhic</i>	..
<i>Molossus</i>	---		<i>Spondee</i>	--	and half	<i>Spondee</i>	--
<i>Anapaest</i>	---		<i>Pyrrhic</i>	--	and half	<i>Spondee</i>	--
<i>Bacchic</i>	---		<i>Iambic</i>	--	and half	<i>Spondee</i>	--
<i>Cretic</i>	---		<i>Trochee</i>	--	and half	<i>Spondee</i>	--

So that, properly speaking, the disyllable Rhythms are the only simple Feet, of which all the rest are compounded. For though *Dionysius* reckons the eight trisyllable Feet among the simple Rhythms (*n*), yet it is plain from hence that they are compounded; and that, in propriety of Speech, only the four disyllable Feet are simple Numbers.

Hence however we may see the justness of another Observation that he makes, *viz.* that every Word (if it be not a Monosyllable) is pronounced in Number,

C 2

or

(*n*) Ἀπλῆς ῥυθμὸς ἢ πρὸς ἑδ' ἐλάττω ἐστὶ δυσὶν συλλαβῶν ὅτε μέγ' ἢ τριῶν. *Dion. Hal. de Struct. Orat. Sect. xvii. ad fin.*

or contains in it some Foot or other, simple or compound (ο).

To which we may add, that every Sentence, or any number of Words taken together, contains some kind of Measure, or is made up of some sort of Feet. And the reason that the Ear perceives a disagreeable harshness in some Words, and a sweetness and fluency in others, is generally owing to nothing else than the different nature and position of the Feet, of which those Words are composed. But of this I intend to speak more particularly when I come to consider the Power of Prosaic Numbers.

C H A P. VII.

Observations on the several Sorts of metrical Feet.

WHAT I have further to remark on the aforesaid metrical Feet shall be comprized under the following Observations.

Observ. I. That the Times of which the forementioned Feet are composed, are observed to be in musical Proportion. *e. g.*

(I.) Those Feet that are divisible into two equal Parts (as the Pyrrhic ˘˘, Spondee ˘˘, Dactyl, ˘˘˘, Anapæst ˘˘˘) are in proportion of the *Unison* in Musick ;

(ο) Πᾶν ὄνομα καὶ ῥῆμα καὶ ἄλλο μέρος λέξεως, ὅτι μὴ μονοσυλλαβὸν ἔσιν, ἐν ῥυθμῷ τινι λέγεται. *Idem. Sect. xvii. ad Init.*

Musick ; because the Times into which they are capable of being divided, are of the same Length ; viz. the Pyrrhic 1 : 1, the rest 2 : 2. And they are said to answer to the *Unison*, because two Strings of equal Length (supposing their respective Tensions and Thickness to be equal) being put into Motion, will be in *Unison*, or give exactly one and the same Sound ; because they will both perform their Vibrations exactly in the same time.

(2.) There are other Feet whose Times are as 1 : 2, or 2 : 1. e. g. the Iambic $\dot{\cup}^2$, Trybrachys $\dot{\cup}\dot{\cup}\dot{\cup}$, Trochee $\dot{\cup}^1$, Molossus $\dot{\cup}^4$. These are in Proportion of the *Octave* or *Diapason* ; which is the most perfect Chord in Musick. For when two Strings, of equal Tension and Thickness, are in this Proportion, i. e. one as long again as the other, they will, upon any Impulse, sound an *Octave* ; that is, the short String will give a Sound eight Notes higher than the long one. And since the Vibration of Chords is reciprocally as their Lengths, the Chord 2 will vibrate once, while the Chord 1 vibrates twice. And the oftener the Vibrations of two Chords coincide the sweeter is the Harmony, and the more perfect the Consonance. And therefore the *Octave*, wherein this Coincidence happens in every second Vibration, is the most perfect Concord.

(3.) Others are in the Proportion of 3 : 2, or 2 : 3, (which is called the *Sesquialterate* Ratio,) e. g. the Bacchic $\dot{\cup}^3$, and Palimbacchic $\dot{\cup}^2$. These answer to the *Diapente* or fifth in Musick ; which is the next most perfect Concord. For when two Strings (of equal Tension and Thickness) whose Lengths are as two to three (i. e. one of which is as long and half

as

as long as the other) are moved, the shortest String will perform three Vibrations whilst the longest is performing two ; and will sound a fifth above it. So that the Coincidence falling on every third Vibration, it makes it the next most perfect Concord (*p*).

Observ. II. You will discern a still greater analogy between the Principles of Verse and Musick, if you further observe, that the *Feet* in the former correspond to the *Bars* in the latter ; that the former are divided into Times, as the latter into Notes ; that as a Bar contains sometimes an equal and sometimes an unequal number of Notes, so a Foot contains sometimes an equal and sometimes an unequal number of Times ; and that the equal and unequal Times in a Foot, answer to those Movements that are generally called *common and triple Time* in Musick.

Hence then it follows, that the metrical Feet are as capable of being measured by the motion of the Hand or Foot, as the musical Notes. This, in Verse, is called *Arsis and Thesis* ; in Musick, *beating of Time*. *e. g.* The musical Bars in common Time, answer to those Feet which consist of two equal Parts ; as the Spondee, Dactyl, and Anapæst. And the Bars in triple Time answer to those Feet whose Quantities are as one to two, or two to one ; as the Trochee, Iambic, and Moloffus ; and both of them to be measured accordingly : that is, by an equal or unequal motion of the Hand.

The beating Time to poetical Numbers, (as I observed) is called measuring them *per Arsin et Thesis*.
When

(*p*) See *Malcolm's Treatise of Musick*, Chap. iii. §. 1. and *Mannwaring's Harmony and Numbers in Prose and Poetry*, Chap. ii.

When the Hand is up, it is called *Arsis* (from ἀίρω *tollo*, to lift up ;) when down, it is called *Thesis* (from τίθημι, *pono*, to put down.) Several of the Antients, as *Diomedes*, and *Sergius* the Grammarian, &c. constantly assigned the first part of the Foot to the *Arsis*, and the second to the *Thesis* ; which was undoubtedly wrong. Others assert the contrary, and make the *Thesis* first and the *Arsis* last, saying, “ that *per Thesis* “ signifies in falling, or during the *first* Time of the “ Measure ; and *per Arsin*, in rising, or during the “ *last* Time of the Measure (*q*),” which, if laid down as a fixt and constant Rule, is as wrong as the other.

The Truth is, that since the Hand must be naturally down at a long Quantity, to distinguish the most emphatical Sounds ; therefore (in conformity to the manner of beating Time in Musick) if the Foot begin with a long Syllable, it must be measured *per Thesis*, or by the Hand first down ; if with a short Quantity, it is measured *per Arsin*, i. e. by the Hand first up. So that according as the first part of the Foot is long or short, the measuring of it begins either with *Thesis* or *Arsis*.

Agreeable to this Account of the antient *Arsis* and *Thesis* is what *Aristides* says, viz. “ that *Arsis* is the “ raising up some part of the Body, and *Thesis* is “ moving down the same (*r*).” And again, “ the “ Dactylic and Trochaic Feet begin with *Thesis* and “ end with *Arsis* ; but the Anapæst and Iambic begin with

(*q*) *Chambers's Cyclopæd.* on the Term *per Arsin*.

(*r*) Ἀρσις μὲν ἐστὶ φορὰ σώματος ἐπὶ τὸ ἄνω, θέσις δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ κάτω ταύτῃ μέρους. *De Musicâ.* p. 31.

“ with *Arfis* and end with *Thesis* (*s*).” And by this Rule we compose Tunes to these Measures even to this Day. And here Dr. *Pemberton*’s Observation is very just, “ that *Aristides* in this case is to be considered as a Person of greater Authority than the Grammarians that differ from him, because he is not only a Writer in Musick, the Science to which this Point properly belongs, but because there is strong Presumption of his being much more antient (*t*).”

To illustrate this by measuring a System of Feet, both of equal and unequal Times.

The following Iambicks move *per Arsin et Thesis*, and are measured by the Hand, first *up* and then *down*, because they begin with a short Quantity.

^{ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th.}
When all | thy Mer|cies, O | my God, |
^{ar. th. ar. th. ar. th.}
My ris|ing Soul | surveys, |
^{ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th.}
Transport|ed with | the View | I’m lost, |
^{ar. th. ar. th. ar. th.}
In Won|der, Love, | and Praise. |

As also in the following Anapæstic.

^{ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th.}
My Time, | o ye Mu|ses, was hap|pily spent, |
^{ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th.}
When Phæ|be went with | me where e|ver I went.

But

(*s*) *Idem.* p. 36, 37.

(*t*) Observations on Poetry, *Sec7.* vi. p. 115.

But in all Latin Hexameters (which consist of Dactyls and Spondees) the Verse moves *per Tbesin et Arsin*, and is measured by the Hand first *down* and then *up*; because the Feet begin with a long Quantity.
e. g.

th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar.

Tityre, | dum rede|o, brevis | est via, | pasce Ca|pellas. |

As also in all English Trochaics. e. g.

th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar.

Did you | but con|sider | duly, |

th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th.

What it | is, O | Man, to | die, ~ |

th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar.

Could you, | Strephon, | tell me | truly, |

th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th.

Let your | Days un|beeded | fly. ~ |

Observ. III. The Feet of four Syllables may justly be rejected as of no Use, especially in English Metre.

What might induce the Antients to invent them I cannot tell. But for the same reason, and to as good purpose, as they composed these Feet of four Syllables by doubling those of two, they might have made other Feet of six Syllables by doubling those of three; or of eight Syllables, by doubling those of four; as indeed they have. But in *Austin's* Judgment, a Foot ought not to exceed four Syllables. And *Dionysius* (who, I think, judges better) expressly says, that it should not be less than two, or more than three Syllables (*u*).

(*u*) De Struct. Orat. Sect. xvii. ad fin.

D

If

If it be asked, what Rule is there then by which to determine the limits of a simple Rhythmus? I know of none for certain. If there were any founded in Nature, or the reason of Things, one can hardly imagine the Antients could have run into such exorbitancies in protracting their Rhythms, as they have done. But perhaps this may be as good a Rule as any, *viz.* That the Foot is to be bounded by the *Arsis* and *Thesis*; that is, that there is but one *Arsis* and *Thesis* in a Foot; and that where ever they end the Foot ends; or when the Hand hath performed its motion once up and once down, as directed by the long or short Quantities which it measures, then the Foot is compleat; and when it begins to perform the same Motion again, a new Foot begins, whether it be of two or three Syllables. Or in fewer Words, the measure of a Foot in Verse is the same as the measure of a Bar in Musick; and is to be determined the same way. And as a metrical Foot corresponds to a musical Bar, care ought to be taken in the composition that they mutually correspond; that is, that not only the short and long Quantities in the Verse answer to the short and long Notes in the Tune, but that the limits of the Foot coincide with that of the Bar. *e. g.*

ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th. ar. th.



Shine mighty God, | on Bri'tain shine, | with Beams | of Heav'nly Grace,

Reveal



Observ. IV. It hath been observed already, that we have several Quantities of shorter Time than those two which compose the *Pyrrhic* Foot ; and it may be proper to observe here, that those very short Quantities are sometimes introduced into *Iambic* Measure, and two of them put for the Space of a single short one.

And this, though it increaseth the number of the Syllables, yet it sweetens the flow of the Verse, and renders the Ear perfectly reconciled to the irregularity of the Metre. *e. g.*

And many an amorous, many a humourous Lay,
Which many a Bard had chanted many a Day.

In the first of these Lines there is no less than four Instances of this, as you may easily observe ; which instead of ten, makes it a Verse of fourteen Syllables. And in the second Line there is two, which makes it a Verse of twelve Syllables. And yet the Ear (which is ever the best Judge in this case) finds nothing in them either redundant, defective, or disagreeable. But is sensible of a sweetness in them that is not ordinarily found in the common *Iambic* Verse (*w*).

D 2

CHAP.

(*w*) So Milton,

— — — — — over many a Tract

Q

C H A P. VIII.

*An Attempt towards adjusting the Quantities
of poetical Numbers to those of musical
Notes.*

IT is certainly a defect in English Psalmody, and in some other of our modern musical Compositions, that the long and full Notes of the Tune are so seldom adapted to the long Syllables or emphatical Words of the Verse ; as Nature, Reason, Sense, and Harmony require them to be.

It is justly observed by Mr. *Malcolm*, “ that in
“ setting Musick to Words, the thing PRINCI-
“ PALLY to be minded is to accommodate the long
“ and short Notes to the Syllables, in such a manner
“ as that the Words may be well separated, and the
“ accented Syllable of every Word be so conspicuous,
“ that what is sung may be distinctly understood (x).”
Instead of which, we often find a long Note in the
Musick fall upon a short Syllable of the Verse ; and
perhaps a Division shall be run upon a [the] or an
[of], whilst the longest Syllable, or the most empha-
tical Word, shall be slur’d off with a Crotchet or a
Quaver,

- - - - -
Of Heav’n they march’d, and many a Province wide
----- *which wrought them Pain*

- - - - -
Implacable, and many a dolorous Groan.

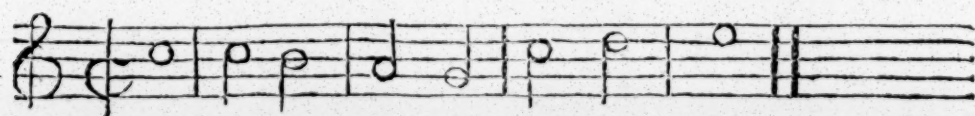
This Mr. *Peck* calls a melting of Syllables, which gives a particular soft-
ness to the Foot, and makes it read like an English Dactyl.

New Memoirs of Mr. *Milton*, p. 112.

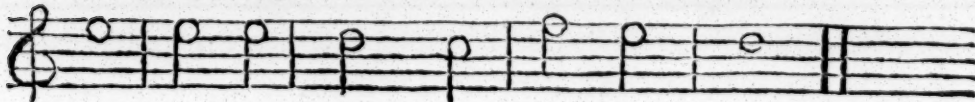
(x) Treatise of Musick, p. 588.

Quaver. Such an Incongruity between the Quantities of the musical Notes, and of the Words that are set to them, is apparently irrational and unharmonious; and gives but too much Ground for the Censure which *Pancirollus* passed upon the modern Musick, "that we hear Sounds without Words, by which the Ear is a little pleased, without any Entertainment to the Understanding (y)."

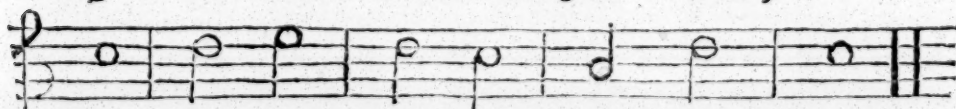
To illustrate this by one plain Instance; let us take the hundredth Psalm, in the common Version and the common Tune, and compare them together, and we shall soon see the Absurdity before mentioned.



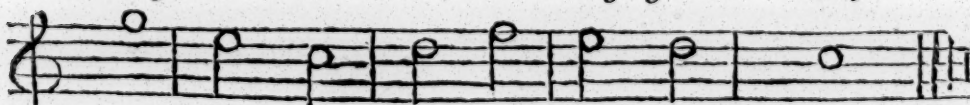
All People that on Earth do dwell,



Sing to the Lord with chearful Voice,



Him serve with Fear, his Praise forth tell,



Come ye before him and rejoice.

Now here it is plain (in Line the first) that the Tune dwells as long on the short Monosyllables,
that,

(y) *Malcolm's Treatise of Musick*, p. 603.

that, *on*, and *do*, as it does on the long Syllable *Earth* ; and that in the Word *People*, the last Syllable, which is short, is protracted as much as the first Syllable, which is long.

In Line the second ; the long Syllables, *Lord* and *with*, are passed over in as quick a time in Singing, as the short Syllables, *to* and *the*.

The third Line, which happens to be all Spondees, suits well enough to the slow Movement of the Tune.

But in the last Line there is great Incongruity ; for the Word, *before*, which is an Iambick, is sung to Notes of equal Length ; and the three following Syllables, which are all short, have each an equal Duration with the preceeding long one.

But now to accommodate the Length of the Notes to the Quantity of the Syllables, suppose the afore-said Tune was set and sung thus.

All People that on Earth do dwell,

Sing to the Lord with chearful Voice,

Him

[31]



Let any Ear now be judge, whether, when the musical Notes are thus adapted to the Quantity of the Syllables, the Harmony be not much improved. And every one sees what a help it is to the Understanding ; without the Employment of which, there can be no pure or rational Devotion.

Psalmodic Musick, thus improved, comes nearer to *Recitative*, and imitates a just and natural Pronunciation ; which distinguishes the emphatical Words, and elucidates the Sense, at the same time that it sweetens the Harmony. And, by a proper Use of the Pricks and Pauses, it may be so contrived (as in the Instance just given,) as to make no alteration in the Time of the Tune, or manner of beating it ; for the Hand will, in Tunes of Common-Time, be always *down* at the beginning of a Bar, or at the long and emphatical Sounds, and *up* at the End of a Bar, or at the short and unaccented Syllables. Thus it always ought to be, but cannot according to the present method of composing the Common-Time Tunes in Psalmody ; where the Hand must oftentimes be necessarily down at a short Syllable. Which is just the same Absurdity as laying the Emphasis upon it in Pronunciation.

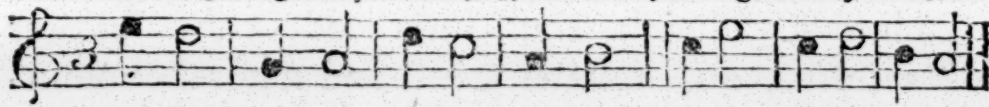
If

If it be said, that whilst such different and dissimilar Feet are used in the Verse, how is it possible to accommodate the Quantity of the Notes to that of the Syllables, without spoiling the Air and Time of the Tune? To this I answer,

(1.) For this reason Verses designed for Psalmody should be composed chiefly of pure Iambics, and sung to the Tunes of Triple-Time; where the Notes of the Tune (answerable to the Quantities in the Verse) are short and long alternately. *e. g.*



Let ev'ry Tongue thy Goodness speak, Thou sov'reign Lord of all;



Thy strength'ning Hands uphold the Weak, And raise the Poor that fall.

Here you see the Syllables of the Verse, and the Notes of the Tune, being alternately short and long, do very naturally accord, and make the Sound and Sense go together.

If it be said, there is too much Uniformity here to be good Harmony. I answer, when the Tune is sung in several Parts, that Uniformity will not be so visible.

If it be further said, that the last Note but one in the Tune should be long, for the sake of the Close. That may be admitted by way of Exception to the Rule before proposed. Because the Agreeableness of such a Close will reconcile us to that Impropriety. As the Harshness of a Discord in Composition is recompensed

recompensed by the sweetness of a perfect Concord immediately following.

(2.) If the Verse designed for Psalmody contain in it other Feet besides Iambics, and be sung to Tunes of Common-Time, still the length of the Notes should be accommodated to that of the Syllables; according to the Specimen before given in the hundredth Psalm; where, notwithstanding this diversity of Feet in the Verse, the Quantity of the Notes is adapted to that of the Syllables; and at the same Time the *Arsis* and *Thesis*, or the proper Measure of the Time by beating is still preserved; whereby the Air and Movement of the Tune will naturally vary, according to the Sense of the Words and Measure of the Verse.

This indeed will make it necessary for each Line of the Tune to be pricked down, with all the several Variations of its Movement, over each Line of the Verse, throughout the whole Psalm; that the Singer may have his Eye on the Words and the Notes adapted to them at the same time; as it is in the French Psalms.

But this Inconvenience will be entirely avoided if (as I said before) we banish our slow Tunes, and sing only Triple-Time Tunes to pure Iambic Measure; which I apprehend to be so considerable an Improvement in Psalmody, that the mention of it, I hope, will justify this Digression.

C H A P. IX.

Of poetical Measures.

THE next thing to be considered in Verse is the
MEASURE.

This is only a Combination of several Feet ; and takes its Name from the Feet or Numbers of which it is composed. For Instance, if it be composed of Iambics, it is called *Iambic Measure*, if of Trochees, *Trochaic*, &c.

But oftentimes the Measure is made up of dissimilar Feet ; especially the Iambic Verse, which admits of Trochees and Spondees in their proper Places, (of which I shall speak more particularly by and by) and which may be called *mixt Iambics*. And the different Air and Run of the Verse, is only owing to the different Feet of which the Measure is composed.

C H A P. X.

Of the Cæsura both in Latin and English Verse.

BUT before I proceed to consider the different Measures of the English Verse, there is one thing to which we must carefully attend, in order to discern the true Foundation of poetick Harmony, and that is the *Cæsura*.

The

The *Cæsura*, when applied to Verse, denotes that natural Pause or Rest of the Voice, which, whatever place it falls upon, divides the Line into two unequal Parts. This I shall consider with regard both to the Latin and English Verse.

(1.) With regard to the Latin Verse.

In *Latin* Hexameters the *Cæsura* sometimes falls on the first Syllable of the second Foot ; and then it is called *Triemimeris*. e. g.

Os Homini sublime dedit, Cælumque tueri.

Here the *Cæsural* Pause falls on the Syllable *ni* in the Word *Homini*.

It most frequently falls on the first Syllable of the third Foot, and then it is called *Penthemimeris*. e. g.

Arma Virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris.

Here the *Cæsura* falls on the Syllable *no* in the Word *cano*.

Sometimes it falls on the first Syllable of the fourth Foot, and then it is called *Hepthemimeris*. e. g.

Si pereo manibus Hominum, periisse juvabit.

Here the *Cæsural* Rest is on the Syllable *num* in the Word *Hominum*.

And sometimes it possesses the first Syllable of the fifth Foot, and then it is called *Enneemimeris*. e. g.

Ille latus niveum molli fultus Hyacintho.

Which Verse exemplifies all the four different Places of the *Cæsura*.

Here it may be observed,

1. That each of these *Cæsura*'s takes its Name from the number of the half Foot on which it falls ; whether it be the *third*, *fifth*, *seventh*, or *ninth*.

2. That the *Penthemimeris Cæsura* is the most common and beautiful. And the reason why the Pause on the first Part of the third Foot is most natural and regular, is because it makes the most equal Division of the Line. And therefore we find that *Virgil*, who had a constant regard to the Harmony of his Numbers, seldom makes use of any other *Cæsura*. /

3. The Syllable on which the *Cæsura* rests should always be the last Syllable of a Word. And so we generally find it is ; because it is unnatural to pause in the middle of a Word, or on a Monosyllable ; nor will the Verse in this case run so smooth ; *e. g.*

Nec Facundia deferet hunc, nec lucidus Ordo.

where the *Cæsura* is a *Hepthemimer*, and falls upon the Monosyllable *hunc*.

4. It rarely happens that there is more than one *Cæsura* in a Verse. More than two there ought not to be, if we regard the Harmony of Numbers ; though sometimes we find three, and sometimes all four, as in the Instance above cited.

5. The *Hepthemimer Cæsura* gives the Verse a rapid Movement, even though the precedent Feet be mostly Spondees. Because the Voice will naturally hurry on to its expected Pause. *e. g.*

Semper ego Auditor tantum ? nunquamne reponam ?

(*Lastly.*)

(*Lastly*.) If there be no *Cæsural* Pause at all in the Verse, it runs extremely flat and heavy. Take an Instance of this in the following Line.

Aurea Carmina, Jūli, scribis, maxime Vatum.

How much better the Verse would run with its proper *Cæsural* Pause, let every Ear be judge.

Carmina, mi Jūli, bona scribis, maxime Vatum.

And here, if the Reader will indulge me a short Digression, I would just observe, that there is a certain false Quantity, sometimes found in the Verses of *Virgil* and *Ovid*, where a short Syllable is put for a long one. *e. g.*

Tityrus hinc aberat, ipsæ te, Tityre, pinus.

Ecl. i. l. 39.

Si pereō manibus hominum, periisse juvabit.

Æn. iii. 606.

Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.

Ovid.

These, I suppose, have hitherto passed for *poeticæ licentiæ*, or certain Anomalies not to be imitated by others, nor excused in Writers of a less established character. Upon which I would beg leave to make the few following Remarks.

(1.) That in each of these three Instances, a short Syllable instead of a long one falls upon the *Cæsural* Pause, called *Cæsura Penthemimeris*; that is, on the first part of the *third* Foot: where we should least expect to find it; because here the Voice naturally rests a while, cutting the Verse (as it were) into two parts. Hence these small Pauses, which are essential to a good *Hexameter*, are called *Cæsurae*.

(2.) This

(2.) This anomalous Quantity, in all these Instances, falls on the last Syllable of a Word.

(3.) It is immediately preceeded by two *Dactyls*.

(4.) When thus situated, as it is in all the Examples above produced, (and many more, I doubt not, might easily be collected by those that are conversant with the Latin Poets) I conceive it was not only allowed, but in some cases required, in the antient Latin Poetry. For when we consider the admirable sweetness and perfection of *Virgil's* Numbers, (than whom no man ever had a more accurate Ear and Judgment) and how precise and delicate he was in the Structure of his Verse, we may justly conclude, I think, that this irregularity did not escape him as the effect of negligence, but was intended by him as a real Elegance.— And the same may be said of *Ovid*. And

(*Finally.*) Its beauty I take to arise from the rapid run of the preceeding Feet, corresponding to the warmth and hurry of the Thought expressed; which does not give us time to stay at the *Cæsural* Pause, as a long Syllable would, but carries us swiftly on, over the usual resting place, almost without stopping, to the end of the Line.

But this I submit to the Judgment of those to whose province it more properly belongs, and who have more leisure for such kind of critical Disquisitions.

But to return from this Digression.

(2.) With regard to English Verse.

The *Cæsura* is as necessary in English Heroicks as it is in Latin Hexameters, and hath as many Variations.

In

In Verses of ten Syllables, the *Cæsura* is regularly on the fourth, in those of twelve on the sixth ; but Verses of eight Syllables and under have no *Cæsura*.

There is this difference between the *Cæsura* in Latin and English Verse, viz. that in the former it falls on the beginning of a Foot, in the latter on the end of it.

Sometimes it falls on the end of the first Foot. *e. g.*

O thou, who with surpassing Glory crown'd !

Most commonly it is at the end of the second Foot. *e. g.*

Not to admire is all the Art I know.

Sometimes on the last part of the third Foot. *e. g.*

Order is Heav'n's great Law ; and this confess'd —

And sometimes at the end of the fourth Foot. *e. g.*

And justify the ways of God to Man.

Here then let it be observed.

1. That there is the same possible Variation of the *Cæsural* Place in English as there is in the Latin Heroicks ; but in the former it is actually varied much oftener than in the latter.

2. That the *Cæsural* Place in Heroick Verse of ten Syllables, is for the most part at the end of the second Foot.

3. That the *Cæsural* Pause is most natural when it coincides with the proper stops or Points that distinguish the sense of the Period. *e. g.*

*Hail, Universal Lord ! be bounteous still
To give us only Good.*

4. That

4. That in English Verse there are often many *Cæsural* Pauses in one Line. e. g.

Him first, *Him* midst, *Him* last, and without end.

5. That when the *Cæsura* falls on the beginning or middle of a Word which ends with a short Syllable, the Pause is always to be made at the end of that Word ; because it is unnatural to pause in the beginning or middle of it. Take a few Instances of this in the several Removes of the *Cæsura*.

O Father what intends thine Hand ? she cry'd.

Here though the *Cæsura* falls on the beginning of the Word *Father*, yet the Pause is not to be made till the last Syllable of it is pronounced. Again,

Whether with Reason or with Instinct blest.

Where the *Cæsural* Pause is to be made after the Word *Reason*, though the *Cæsura* falls on the first Syllable of that Word. Again,

Our voluntary Service he requires.

Where the *Cæsural* Pause is after the Word *Service*.

6. The several Variations of the *Cæsura*, together with the Stops, contribute no less than the disposition of the Feet to diversify the Verse. Whence arises the vast Variety of Harmony in the English Heroicks ; which is more copious than that in the Latin, because the former admits not only a greater diversity of Feet than the latter, but more frequent removes of the *Cæsural* Pauses.

7. The *Cæsura* falling constantly on the fourth Syllable in the English Pentameters or Heroicks, creates a dull uniformity in the flow of the Verse,
which

which tires and offends the Ear ; and especially if there be the like uniformity in the Measure or Disposition of the Feet. Take for an Instance the following Lines from Sir *Richard Blackmore's Poem on the Creation*.

*Sages remark, we labour not to shew
The Will is free, but that the Man is so.
For what inlighten'd Reas'ner can declare
What human Will and Understanding are ?*

Again,

*Since thou didst all the spacious World display,
Homage to thee let all obedient pay.
Let glitt'ring Stars that dance their destin'd Ring
Sublime in Sky, with vocal Planets sing.*

Who does not observe (notwithstanding their smoothness) a dulness in the Movement of these Numbers ; occasioned only by the constant return of the same Measure, and the same division of the Verse ? The Numbers being almost all Iambic, and the *Cæsura* always possessing the fourth Syllable.

C H A P. XI.

Of the Iambic Measure, both pure and mixt.

THE different Measures used in English Poetry are principally these three. The *Iambic*, *Trochaic*, and *Anapestic*.

F

I. The

I. The *Iambic*.

I begin with this, because it is by far the most common and considerable; being appropriated to *Psalmody*, and the *Epic* or *Heroick Verse*.

But though it is called *Iambic Measure*, it is not always made up of pure *Iambics*, but frequently admits of all the other three dissyllable Feet; which being skilfully mixt with the *Iambics*, so diversify the Measure as to give it a Variety and Harmony far beyond what we find in the *Latin Hexameters*, which are confined to *Dactyls* and *Spondees*.

To illustrate this, I shall briefly reduce the Measures of this mixt *Iambic Verse*, in a few Instances extracted from some of our best English Poets. Let the first Specimen be the following imitation of *Adrian's* dying Words addressed to his Soul.

I.

Poor lit|tle, pret|ty, flut|tering Thing !
 Must we | no lon|ger live | together ?
 And dost | thou prune | thy trem|bling Wing,
 To take | thy Flight | thou know'st | not whither ?

II.

Thy hu|morous Vein, | thy pleas|ing Folly,
 Lies all | neglec|ted, all | forgot,
 And pen|sive, wav|ering, me|lancholy,
 Thou dread'st | and hop'st | thou know'st | not what.

Line

Line 1. Begins with a *Spondee*. The other Feet are all Iambics. And dwelling longer upon the first part of the Spondee than the last, (as here on the Word *Poor*) hath in this place a peculiar elegance and propriety. For (according to what I have before observed) as some short Syllables are less than a single Time, so some long ones are more than a double Time; and, when set to Musick, ought to be distinguished accordingly.

Line 2. The first Foot is a *Trochee*, all the rest Iambics; the Verse concluding with a double Syllable.

Lines 3. and 4. are both pure Iambics.

Line 5. Is also all Iambic. In the beginning of the second Foot two short Syllables are put for one; for being very short, they are no more in Quantity than one Time; and therefore this contraction makes no interruption in the Harmony of the Numbers, but rather sweetens it, as before observed, Ch. vii. Obs. iv.

Line 6. The Numbers in this are the same with those in the first Line. The first a Spondee, all the rest Iambic.

Line 7. All Iambics. In the beginning of the third Foot there are two short Times contracted into one; as in Line fifth.

Line 8. Is all pure Iambic.

C H A P. XII

*Remarks on the various Movements in the
mixt Iambic Verse.*

BEFORE I proceed to reduce any other kind of Iambics, it may be proper to remark some of the particular Beauties and Elegancies in the various Movements of this sort of Verse, arising from a judicious combination of the Numbers ; to which Remarks I shall have occasion hereafter to refer, when I more particularly examine some other Iambic Measures.

Remark I.

To begin a Line with a Trochee, and Iambic immediately following, (which makes the tetrasyllable Foot called *Choriambic*) is beautiful, and very frequent in our best Poets. *e. g.*

Daughter of God and Man, accomplish'd Eve.
Milton.

Pleasures the Sex, as Children Birds, pursue ;
Still out of Reach, but never out of View.
Pope,

Remark II.

A Pyrrhic may possess any place of the Verse, except the last. But wherever it is, it gives a brisk Movement to the Measure.

Sometimes

Sometimes the first Foot is a Pyrrhic, followed by an Iambic, which is a very quick Motion. *e. g.*

That brought me on a sudden to the Tree

*Of interdicted Knowledge : fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my Fancy than by Day :*

And as I wandring look'd,——

Sometimes the second Foot is a Pyrrhic ; and when the rest are Iambics the Movement is very sweetly accelerated. *e. g.*

A Tyrant to the Wife his Heart approves,

A Rebel to the very King he loves.

Pope.

A Pyrrhic in the Place of the third Foot is very agreeable. *e. g.*

With thee conversing I forget all Time.

Milton.

Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,

Yet bath her Humour most when she obeys.

Pope.

The last Line is an Instance of the fourth Place being possessed by a *Pyrrhic* (z).

Remark

(z) A certain Writer on this Subject affirms — “ That two Syllables placed together in the same Foot, which must both of Necessity be pronounced short, (i. e. a *Pyrrhic*) will certainly destroy the Harmony of the Verse.” *Observ. on Poetry*, p. 131.

This is too precipitantly affirmed. For the Truth is, a *Pyrrhic* judiciously introduced, does greatly improve the Harmony of the Verse ; as every good Ear from the foregoing Lines may judge.

Remark III.

When the last Foot but one is a Spondee, the Movement is slow. But there is a peculiar force and elegance sometimes in this disposition of it : especially when it falls on a very emphatical Word ; and is succeeded by an Iambic, which regularly closes the Verse. *e. g.*

Whatever Hypocrites austerely talk.

Night regain'd

Her old Possession, and extinguish'd Life.

But all sat mute,

Pondering the Danger with deep Thought ; and each (a).

Milton.

Remark IV.

To begin the Line with a Spondee, succeeded immediately by a Pyrrhic and Iambic, is a mighty agreeable Measure. *e. g.*

On desperate Revenge, that shall redound——

Sole Pledge of his Obedience.

Best Image of myself, and dearer half.

Milton.

Remark

(a) The aforesaid Author in the same Place observes — “ That a Syllable in the beginning of the fourth Foot, which is best pronounced long, renders *the Verse* less perfect.” — If he means, it renders the *Iambic Measure* less perfect, he is certainly right ; but if he means, it always renders the *Harmony of the Numbers* less perfect, I think these Lines prove that he is certainly wrong.

Remark V.

An Iambic Verse should regularly close with an Iambic Foot. But *Milton* frequently concludes with a Spondee: which, though it be something anomalous, and may be considered as the same kind of licensed irregularity as concluding a Latin Hexameter with two Spondees, yet in some cases it is not without its force and beauty. *e. g.*

*Here Love his golden Shafts employs ; here lights
His constant Lamp.*

*Reigns here and revels ; not in the bought Smiles (b)
Of Harlots.*

And on their naked Limbs the flowry Roof

*Showr'd Roses, which the Morn repair'd, sleep on
Blest Pair.*

Milton.

Remark VI.

The short Numbers come in very agreeably after the long ones. *e. g.*

*Wise Fool ! with Pleasures too refin'd to please,
With too much Spirit to be e'er at ease,*

With

(b) Here I cannot forbear to give my Reader the Pleasure of observing that most ingenious Improvement, which the late learned Critic, *Dr. Bentley*, hath proposed to make on this Passage.

Not in the *bought Smiles* of Harlots.] “ Here is very bad Accent ;
“ which makes the *Foot* stumble and break its *Knee*. If *he* could have
“ revised it, he would have given it thus, or some other Way ;

not in *purchas'd Smiles*,

or

not in *th'bir'd Smiles*.”

Quantum est Sapere !

*With too much Quickness ever to be taught,
With too much thinking to have common Thought.*
Pope.

Remark VII.

Sometimes a Line concludes not ungracefully with a Choriambic. e. g.

*There is a Cave
Within the Mount of God, fast by his Throne.
well hast thou fought
The Fight of Faith.
Save he who reigns above, none can resist (c).*
Milton.

Remark VIII.

Two Lines successively should not have exactly the same Order of Feet, unless they have exactly the same Turn of Thought, and in that case it is beautiful. e. g.

*Where none admire, 'tis useless to excell;
Where none are Beaus, 'tis vain to be a Belle.*
Pope.

But to have the same kind and disposition of Numbers, and the same Cæsural Division for three or four Lines

(c) Dr. Pemberton thinks the Trochaic Foot in the fourth Place of this Line destroys the Measure; and therefore would have it thus.

Save he who reigns above, can none resist. Id. p. 132.

But as the Word *none* requires a very strong Emphasis, it has a much stronger in the Place which the Author hath assigned it, than it has in the Place where the Doctor puts it; and expresses the Sense in a more lively manner. And a good Author will always have a greater regard to the life of his Expression, than the smoothness of his Numbers.

Lines successively is unharmonious, and tires the Ear with too much uniformity and smoothness (*d*).

Remark IX.

Though the most usual and natural place of the Trochee be the first and third, yet it is sometimes not inelegantly found in the second and fourth.

or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy Creation and unmake
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made:
But yet all is not done. Man disobeying.

Milton, B. iii. l. 203.

O, unexampled Love !
Love no where to be found less than divine.
Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his Prey.

B. iii. l. 411. 441.

(*d*) And therefore I can by no Means agree with the learned Author before mentioned, " That no irregular composition of Feet is by any means necessary to that Variety which is required in the longest Work. The change which will be made by the various breaking of the Feet by Cæsuras, dividing the Verses after different fashions by the construction of the Sentences, continuing often the same Sentence, and even the same part of a Sentence, from one Verse to another, are all that can properly be made use of for that purpose." Id. p. 133. — If so, all our best Poets hitherto have been guilty of great *Impropriety*. And if we confine our epic Verse in a large Work to the Iambic Foot only, I think it is not possible, notwithstanding all the variations of the Cæsura and Pauses, to avoid, what he calls an insipid Similarity. And of this, if I mistake not, his favourite Poem, on which he hath obliged the Public with a very judicious Critique, is a sufficient Proof. And *Dryden*, with all his sweetness, is too often guilty of the same Fault.

Remark X.

A Spondee may possess any place ; because of all the Feet it comes nearest to the Iambic : and therefore we sometimes meet with a short Iambic Verse consisting of all Spondees. *e. g.*

Him serve with Fear, his Praise forth tell.

Remark XI.

Provided the Iambic Air and Movement prevail, and is easily distinguished by the Ear in any Verse, *that* may properly be called an Iambic Verse, whatever heterogeneous Numbers be introduced into it. But when the Iambic Air is lost by introducing too many Numbers of another kind, it is no longer Iambic:

Remark XII.

That which throws a Verse out of the Iambic Air and Measure, is the admitting into it two heterogeneous Feet together, without an Iambic Foot between them.

Two heterogeneous Feet are often admitted into one Iambic Line ; and if an Iambic Foot be placed between them, the Measure is very well preserved : but when two such Feet are brought in, the one immediately succeeding the other, the Iambic Measure is then intirely overthrown.

This will appear very plain by observing some such faulty Lines in *Milton*, who often brings in two heterogeneous Feet together, and sometimes three. *e. g.*

My

My Vanquisher spoil'd of his vaunted Spoils.

The Sovereign Sentence that Man should find grace

All who have their Reward on Earth ; the Fruits—

On him who had stole Jove's authentic Fire.

Interpreted ; which not long after he—

B. iii. l. 251. 145. 451, &c.

It is plain that these Lines are no kind of Verse, and the reason why they are not, is now as plain. However we must, in this case, make an exception of two Spondees placed successively, for the reason before mentioned, viz. the Affinity of that Number with the Iambic.

C H A P. XIII.

A Reduction of the mixt Iambic Measure.

I Proceed now to the Examination of some other Iambic Measures. Let us take the three following Stanzas in Mr. Pope's Universal Prayer.

If I | am right, | O teach | my Heart

Still in | the right | to stay ;

If I | am wrong, | thy Grace | impart
To find | that bet|ter Way.

Save me | alike | from fool|ish Pride
And im|pious Dis|content,
At ought | thy Wis|dom hath deny'd,
Or ought | thy Good|ness lent.

Teach me | to feel | ano|ther's Woe,
To hide | the Fault | I see ;
That Mer|cy I | to o|thers show,
That Mer|cy show | to me.

In these Numbers we may observe,

(1.) That the three first Lines in the first Stanza, and the first Lines in the other two, begin with a *Choriambic*, or a Trochee and Iambic immediately following. An elegance in the Iambic Measure which I have already taken notice of in Remark I. (e). And this being

(e) Dr. Pemberton asserts that — “ Though the Anapæstic Foot contains the same Number of Measures (*i. e.* Times) with the Dactyl, and the Trochaic with the Iambic ; yet the Anapæst is never used in Dactylic Measures, except in a very few Instances at the beginning of a Verse ; NOR ARE TROCHAICS MIXT WITH IAMBICS.” — *Observations on Poetry*, p. 113.

If he confines his last Assertion to the Latin and Greek Poetry it may be true enough ; but if he meant to comprehend also the English Poetry, (as he should seem by speaking thus in the general, and by the Reason he immediately subjoins) I dare say he cannot read a Page in *Milton*, *Pope*, or *Young*, or any of our best Poets, but he will find his Assertion contradicted ; as it is no less than *four* times in the compass of the *five* first Lines above quoted.

That

being a quick Movement, a Spondee immediately following tempers it very gracefully. As in the first Line of the first Stanza ; and in this Verse,

Fancy | and Pride | seek Things | at vast Expence.

(2.) In the second Line of the second Stanza, two short Syllables are contracted into one ; of which we have had Instances already.

(3.) The two last Lines of the third Stanza begin with a Spondee. See Remark IV.

(4.) Lines

That which led the Doctor into this Mistake, was an apprehension that this mixture of dissimilar Feet would disturb the equality of the Movement, when the Verses are set to Musick, and measured *per Arsin et Thesis*. But our narrative five-foot Verse (which is mixt Iambic) is not designed for Musick. And as for Psalmodic Verse, and Odes designed for Song or Musick, the Measure indeed, in these, ought to be pure and unmixed. And I know of no advantage or use there is in being able exactly to beat the Time to the Numbers of the Verse, unless they are to be sung or set to Musick. That would be but a trifling Ornament. And the advantage of thus diversifying the Harmony of the Numbers, by a judicious mixture of them, suitably to the nature of the Subject, as the modern Practice is, I think, is infinitely preferable. By which means we have broke through the shackles by which the Poetry of the Antients was so much cramped, though falsely deemed by them an Ornament, *viz.* a constant, heavy, dull uniformity of Measure ; which at once checked the Poet's Fire and spoiled the Harmony of his Verse.

In their Heroick Verse indeed they were more at Liberty. For though they were confined to two Feet, *viz.* *Dactyls* and *Spondees*, yet they were free to mix them as they pleased. Whence arose all the sweetness of *Virgil's* Numbers, and the force of *Homer's*. How unreasonable then is it to endeavour to take away this advantage from the Moderns ! to confine their Heroicks to one single Foot, *viz.* the *Iambic*, and to censure the Introduction of others as a Defect ! and that in opposition to all the best Authorities to the contrary ! As the forementioned Author does in the following Words, — “ As an *Error* in the Measure of the Verse is “ the least offensive towards the beginning of it, our Poets do often in- “ dulse themselves in commencing their Verse with a Syllable carrying “ Emphasis. But such Verse labours in reality under a *Defect*, which is “ greatest when the following Syllable also cannot be lengthened out.” *Id.* p. 130, 131. — But what he calls an *Error* and a *real Defect*, I believe the Reader now sees to be not only *right* but a *real Beauty*.

(4.) Lines the first and last of the first Stanza have a Spondee in the last place but one. See Remark III.

(5.) Line the third of the third Stanza hath a Pyrrhic in the second place. See Remark II.

(6.) Of these twelve Lines there are but three that are pure Iambics. *viz.* the sixth, eighth, and tenth.

C H A P. XIV.

An Examination of Milton's Numbers.

LET us next examine the Numbers in the first sixteen Lines of *Milton's Paradise lost*; which contain almost all the various combinations of Feet that are introduced into English Iambics: as a Specimen of that liberty which the Author intended to take in his Measures throughout the Poem.

Of Man's | first Dis|obe|dience, and | the Fruit
 Of that | forbid|den Tree, | whose mor|tal Taste
 Brought Death | into | the World | and all | our Woe,
 With Loss | of E|den, till | one great|er Man
 Restore | us, and | regain | the blis|ful Seat,

5

Sing

Sing heav'nly Muse ; | that on | the se|cret Top
 Of Ho|reb or | of Si|nai didst | inspire
 That Shep|herd who | first taught | the cho|sen Seed,
 In the | Begin|ning how | the Heav'ns | and Earth
 Rose out | of Cha|os : Or | if Si|on Hill 10
 Delight | thee more | and Si|loa's Brook | that flow'd
 Fast by | the O|racle | of God ; | I thence
 Invoke | thy Aid | to my | adven|trous Song,
 That with | no mid|dle Flight | intends | to soar
 Above | th'Ao|nion Mount, | while it | pursues 15
 Things un|attempt|ed yet | in Prose | or Rhime.

Here observe,

(1.) That of these sixteen Lines only one is pure Iambic, viz. the *eleventh*, and in that there is a Contraction of two short Syllables into one in the Word *Siloa's*.

(2.) That of these sixteen Lines only two Couplets have just the same Measure, viz. the *tenth* and *twelfth*, (each of which consists orderly of a Trochee, Iambic, Pyrrhic and two Iambics ; which creating a rapid Movement, are succeeded, the one by a solemn pure Iambic, and the other by one that is nearly so) and Lines the *fifth* and *seventh*, which are Iambic, with

with a Pyrrhic in the second place. But a Line of a very different Movement is interposed, which prevents a dull uniformity. And this judicious mixture of Numbers, and change of Measures, is the true Source of that Pleasure which the Ear finds in the flow of *Milton's* Verse ; who varies his Feet, and diversifies his Measures (either through Art or Nature) more than any one of all our English Poets ; and makes it what he himself calls

————— a various-measur'd Verse.

Parad. reg. B. iv. l. 256.

(3.) In the first Line two short Syllables are contracted into one, in the Word *Disobedience* ; and since the Syllable *ence* is not one of those very short ones which easily admit of such a contraction (it being naturally long, and put for a short one only as unaccented) the Number is defective. But the same apology may be allowed *Milton* which is generally made for *Homer*, who hath also a false Quantity in the very first Line of his *Iliad*, viz. that the Poet's Mind was so warmed and possessed with the Grandeur of his Subject, that he was unattentive to the exactness of his Numbers.

(4.) In the second Line the last Foot but one is a *Spondee*, which is a slow Movement. See Remark III.

(5.) The third Line begins with a *Spondee*, *Pyrrhic*, and *Iambic*, in order, which is a very agreeable Measure. See Remark IV.

(6.) Line the fourth has a *Pyrrhic* in the third place, whose rapidity is very agreeably corrected by *Iambics*. See Remark II.

(7.) The

(7.) The same may be said of Line the fifth, where the Pyrrhic possesses the second place.

(8.) The sixth Line concludes with a Pyrrhic and two Iambics ; which is a sweet and flowing Measure. See Remark II.

(9.) The seventh Line hath precisely the same kind and arrangement of Feet as the fifth. But the intermediate Line being a very different Movement, renders this similarity almost imperceptible. See Remark VIII.

(10.) The eighth Line hath a flow Movement, the first and third Feet being Spondees ; but is very agreeably succeeded by two Lines whose Numbers are brisk and flowing. But though the Movement in these two Lines have an equal rapidity, yet by varying the order of the Feet it hath no uniformity. And the rapid flow of the Numbers is seasonably checked in the eleventh Line, by a Series of Iambics.

I believe no one that hath a taste for Musick can read these four Lines without finding his Ear pleased with the Harmony of the Numbers, though he understood not the sense of the Words.

(11.) In the ninth Line the four first Feet are Pyrrhics and Iambics alternately, which is a very quick Measure. See Remark II.

(12.) Line the tenth begins with a Choriambic ; which Measure, if not too often used, is very beautiful at the beginning of a Line. See Remark I.

The eleventh Line is pure Iambic.

The twelfth the same as the tenth.

H

The

The thirteenth is Iambic with a Pyrrhic in the middle.

The fourteenth begins with a Pyrrhic and Iambic. See Remark II.

In the fifteenth the last Foot but one is a Trochee, which makes the Verse conclude with a Choriambic: this is a peculiar Close, but not unfrequent in *Milton*. See Remark VII.

The sixteenth Line gracefully concludes the Period with an Iambic Verse, introduced with a Choriambic.

Thus various are *Milton's* Numbers. And it is this just and judicious mixture of the short Numbers with the long, and the quick with the slow, that composes the Harmony of his Verse; in which he is very happy at the same time that he appears very negligent.

But this great Master of Poetic Numbers was not without his Faults, even in this very point in which he so much excelled; nay, so negligent is he sometimes of his Measure, that he hath now and then so disposed of his Numbers as quite to destroy the form and structure of Iambic Verse. *e. g.*

In their | triple | Degrees; | Regions, | to which

B. v. l. 750.

Every Ear will perceive this to be no Verse; much less Iambic. And if you observe the order of the Feet, the reason is very obvious. The first is a Pyrrhic, the second a Trochee, the third Iambic, the fourth a Trochee, and the last Iambic. Now as the first three Feet are a Pyrrhic, Trochee and Iambic, in this order they make two Anapæsts; and the Line concluding

concluding with a Trochee and Iambic, makes the last Foot also an Anapæst. And there are wanting only two short Syllables at the end of the third Foot to make the whole Line purely Anapæstic. Thus

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
In their triple Degrees ; and the Regions, to which

The rapid flow of Anapæstics, is of all things most contrary to the stately movement of Iambics. And the Line being a composition of these two contrary Measures, and neither the one nor the other, it is no Verse, but downright Prose (*f*).

As *Milton's* Numbers are so various, and the Times of which they are composed so unequal, it is impossible to measure or beat Time to them regularly *per Arsin et Thesis*, as we do those Numbers that are pure and unmixed ; that is, such as compose the pure Iambic, Trochaic, or Anapæstic Measure. And for the same reason, they cannot with propriety be set to any one uniform piece of Musick ; because the air of the Musick must alter with the flow of the Numbers.

(*f*) Numerical Feet are introduced into Prose, and the proper Choice and Arrangement of them is that which constitutes a smooth and flowing Stile, as will be shewn hereafter. And that which distinguishes the structure of Prose Composition from that of Verse, is not the introduction of contrary Feet, (as some have imagined : for that is frequent in Verse) but the introduction of contrary Measures ; so as to make it properly neither one Measure nor another ; as in the Instance just produced.

C H A P. XV.

The Solution of a Poetical Problem.

I Shall conclude my Remarks on the Iambic Measure with observing, that from the Principles before advanced, we may be able to account for the peculiar elegance of that celebrated Distich of Mr. Denham's in his *Cooper's Hill*, which hath been rendered so famous by Mr. Dryden's proposing it as a sort of Problem to exercise the Wits of Grammarians, to discover the true source of its Harmony.

Tho' deep, | yet clear ; | tho' gen|tle, yet | not dull ;
 Strong with|out Rage ; | without | o'erflow|ing full.

Mr. Hughes supposes that all the admired Musick of these Lines arises from the free and unforced quantity of the Syllables, the propriety of the Pauses, diversifying the grammatical structure of the Sentences, transposing the order of the Words, and closing the Couplet with the emphatical Word *full* ; and then concludes, *if there be any other Mystery in these Lines, I own, it is beyond my skill to discover it* (g). — Now I apprehend there is a further Mystery in them, which indeed he was not aware of, arising from the order and quality of the Poetical Numbers ; in the choice and disposition of which, the Poet was extremely happy. For he hath introduced into these two Lines every one of the dissyllable Feet ; the Iambic and Pyrrhic in the first,

(g) See Say's Essays on the Harmony, &c. of Numbers, p. 151, 152.

first, and the Trochee and Spondee in the second. So that it hath all the advantage of Harmony which variety of Numbers can give it. Nor is he less happy in the disposition of these Numbers. For in the first Line, excepting the fourth Foot, they are all Iambics; the last part of each falling not only on the accented Syllables, but emphatical Words, and those in contrast too, makes the sound and the sense most perfectly accord. The fourth place is possessed by a Pyrrhic, which is always an agreeable Movement. See Remark II.

The second Line begins with a Trochee; which gives Motion, as it were, to the River; but is immediately checked by the Spondees and Iambics that alternately follow. So that the stately flow of the Numbers expresses that of the River they describe. *And the Sound is still an Eccho to the Sense.*

In a Word then, the beauty of this Distich consists in two things, viz. the Elegance of the Stile, and the Harmony of the Verse. — The Elegance of the Stile arises from the transposition of the Words, the propriety of the Pauses, and the contrasts of the Description; and the Harmony of the Verse arises from the variety and disposition of the Numbers, happily adapted to the emphasis of the Words, and the nature of the Subject; as I have just shewn. And this I take to be a true Solution of this Poetical Problem, which there needs no other *Ædipus* to unravel, than a little insight into the Power of Numbers and the Principles of Verse.

So much for the English Iambics, both pure and mixt. The next Measure I shall consider is

C H A P.

C H A P. XVI.

*Of Trochaic Measure.*II. **T**HE Trochaic.

This Measure consists of all Trochees, with a supernumerary long Syllable at the end of the Line, without the admission of any other Feet. As a Specimen of this, take the following Lines.

I.

Blest with | Sense, with | Temper | blest,
 Wisdom | o'er thy | Lips pre|sides,
 Virtue | guards thy | gen'rous | Breast,
 Kindness | all thy | Actions | guides.

II.

Ev'ry | Home-felt | Bliss is | mine,
 Ev'ry | Female | Grace is | thine,
 Chaste De|portment, | artless | Mein,
 Converse | sweet, and | Heart se|rene.

III.

Sinks my | Soul with | gloomy | Pain?
 See, she | smiles, 'tis | Joy a|gain.

Swells a | Passion | in my | Breast ?
Hark, she | speaks, and | all is | rest.

IV.

Oft as | Clouds my | Path o'er | spread,
Doubtful | where my | Steps should | tread,
She with | Judgment's | steady | Ray,
Marks and | smooths the | better | Way.

Fitzosborn's Letters.

Sometimes the Lines of the Stanza end with alternate Rhime, and the first and third Line with a double one. e. g.

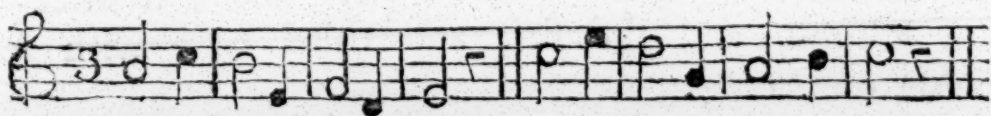
If 'tis | Joy to | wound a | Lover,
How much | more to | give him | ease !
When this | Passion | we dis | cover,
O, how | pleasing | 'tis to | please !

C H A P. XVII.

Observations on the Trochaic Measure.

ON this kind of Measure we may make the following Observations.

Observ. I. This sort of Verse being uniform and pure, is capable of being exactly measured by the motion of the Hand *per Arsin et Tbesin* ; and may be set to Musick in *Triple Time*, e. g.



I am not concern'd to know What to-morrow Fate will do :



'Tis enough that I can say I've possess'd myself to-day.

Observ. II. This Verse admits of no Feet but Trochees ; especially not an Iambic, which having a direct contrary Movement, interrupts the run of the Verse very disagreeably. e. g.

*Then if haply Midnight Death
Seize my Flesh, and stop my Breath,
Yet to-morrow I shall be
Heir to the best Part of me.*

This

This last Line is not pure Trochaic ; for the second Foot being Iambic, throws it quite out of its proper Measure.

Observ. III. Sometimes we find two short Times put for one ; which must always be considered as a defect in this Measure. For though the Iambic Measure admits of a great mixture of other Feet, as hath been already seen, yet Trochaics and Anapæstics do not, as every Ear will determine. *e. g.*

*O the soft delicious View,
Ever charming, ever new !
Greens of various Shades arise
Deck'd with Flowers of various Dies :
Paths by meeting Paths are crost,
Alleys in winding Alleys lost ;
Fountains playing thro' the Trees,
Give Coolness to the passing Breeze.*

Rosalind.

In the sixth Line, the second and third Syllables are both short, and to preserve the Measure must be contracted into one short Time, which interrupts the flow of the Verse. The Measure therefore would be more pure if the Words had been thus,

Ways in winding Ways are lost.

Observ. IV. Sometimes a supernumerary short Quantity is found in the beginning of the Line ; which, though it be a defect, yet is not so obvious or ungrateful as the other. *e. g.*

Fountains playing through the Trees,

Give Coolness to the passing Breeze.

In this last Line you see the Measure is compleat without the Word [*Give*]. And though the Sense requires it should be pronounced distinctly, yet the Verse requires it to be pronounced so quick and low as scarce to be discerned, which shews it to be a defect. And therefore it were better thus,

Sweetly cool the passing Breeze.

Whereby the same Sense and Measure are preserved.

Observ. V. There is too much uniformity in this kind of Measure to make it long pleasing ; and therefore it is never used in a long Work, or in any Subject that requires the Solemn or Sublime ; to which the mixt Iambic is peculiarly adapted. It is most suitable to Sonnets and Subjects of Amusement ; and to the taste of Children, who are not so apt to be offended with the jingle of Sounds or identity of Numbers.

Observ. VI. As a Trochee is the reverse of an Iambic Foot, so the Trochaic is directly opposite to the Iambic Measure. *This* being strong and masculine, and *that* weak and languid ; as all those Measures are that move from a long to a short Quantity.

Observ. VII. Under the Trochaic Measures may be comprehended the *Anacreontic* Verse. This is usually divided into Stanzas, each Stanza containing four Lines which rhyme alternately to each other ; and every Line consists of three Trochees and a long Syllable.
e. g.

I. Cease,

I.

*Cease, Trelawne, cease to teize me,
Mirth and Musick are but vain ;
Wine and Laughter now displease me,
And thy Rules increase my Pain.*

II.

*These are Joys all out of Season,
Empty, trifling, pert and dull ;
Cease then, Peter, cease to reason,
Lest thou prove the greater Fool.*

III.

*Couldst thou teach me to despise her,
Pleas'd I'd listen to the Sound,
Else what boots it to be wiser ?
Since thy Precepts false are found.*

The Rules to be observed in composing this kind of Verse are these following. (1.) Not a single unnecessary Expletive is to be admitted. (2.) The first and third Lines should conclude with double Rhyme. (3.) There must not be one studied Phrase, Simile, or far-fetched Expression ; but all should be smooth, easy and harmonious, and the Words follow each other in the same natural order as in common conversation. (4.) Frequent repetitions of the same Word, if natural, is very graceful. (*Lastly.*) The Ode should conclude with the same Thought, and almost in the same Words with which it began.

Observ. VIII. This Measure, which is naturally soft, languid and flowing, is extremely well fitted for the description of the most tender and melting Passions either of Love or Sorrow ; or of those softenings of the Heart that arise from a mixture of both : and especially when the double and single Rhymes, and the long and short Lines are skilfully intermixt. *e. g.*

*On a Bank beside a Willow,
Heav'n her Cov'ring, Earth her Pillow,
Sad Amynta sighs alone !
From the cheerless Dawn of Morning,
'Till the Dews of Night returning ;
Singing thus she made her Moan :
" Hope is banish'd,
" Joys are vanish'd,
" Damon my belov'd is gone !"*

Dryden.

C H A P. XVIII.

Of the Anapæstic Measure.

THE next kind of Measure (and the last I shall take Notice of) is the Anapæstic.

Into this no Number can be regularly admitted, but the *Anapæst* ; a trissyllable Foot having the two first Syllables short and the last long. *e. g.*

Young

Young Stre|phon, a Shep|herd that long | had been smit,
 With the Charms | of fair Syl|via's Beau|ty and Wit,
 As he si|lently wan|der'd to soothe | his soft Pain,
 Met an|tient Palæ|mon a neigh|bouring Swain.
 Thou art pen|sive my Friend, | said the chear|ful old Hind,
 That lan|guishing As|pect betrays | thy fond Mind.
 Such sigh|ing in se|cret and haunt|ing the Grove
 Are sure | Indica|tions of be|ing in Love.
 Alas ! | cry'd the Youth, | my Disease | thou hast found,
 But where | is the Balm | that can cure | the deep Wound ?

C H A P. XIX.

Observations on the Anapæstic or Dactylic Measure.

ON this species of Verse I would observe,
 (1.) That it is sometimes divided into Stanzas
 of four Lines, each containing three Feet with alter-
 nate Rhyme. e. g.

Tue

True Love | in a Soul | that's sincere,
 Is bet|ter than Lan|guage or Art.
 Fine Si|miles tic|kle the Ear,
 But Na|ture must sof|ten the Heart.

(2.) The long Metre of this kind of Verse is best adapted to Catches, Tales and Sonnets, or Subjects of Wit and Humour. *e. g.*

If e'er in thy Sight I found favour, Apollo,
 Defend me from all the Disasters that follow ;
 From the Knaves and the Fools, and the Fops of the Time,
 From the Drudges in Prose, and the Triflers in Rhime.
 From dull thinking Blockheads as sober as Turks,
 And petulant Bards, who repeat their own Works ;
 From all the gay Things of a dressing-room Show,
 From the Sight of a Belle, and the Smell of a Beau.

(3.) When the Metre is very short, consisting only of two Feet in the Line, with immediate Rhyme, it is then proper to describe a bold and martial Spirit, and express Indignation and Fury. *e. g.*

No, no | 'tis decreed
 The Trai|tress shall bleed ;
 No Fear | shall alarm
 No Pi|ty disarm ;

In my Rage | shall be seen

The Revenge | of a Queen.

Rofamond.

(4.) Nothing is more common in this sort of Measure than to drop the first Time of the first Foot ; which makes the Line begin with an Iambic instead of an Anapæst.

This can scarce be called a defect, because it does not at all offend the Ear : and being in the beginning of the Line, makes little or no alteration in the Time ; which is easily supplied by a short Pause. Of this you have a Specimen in the first Foot of each of the four first Lines just now cited. To see the difference which such an Ellipsis makes, you may fill up the forementioned Feet in the following manner.

No, no, no | 'tis decreed

That the Trai|tress shall bleed ;

For no Fear | shall alarm,

And no Pi|ty disarm.

(5.) Sometimes a short Syllable is wanting in the middle of a Verse ; and then to preserve the Time, the Voice must dwell the longer on the preceeding one. e. g.

Once

Once | on a Time | as old Sto|ries rehearse
 A Fri|ar would needs | shew his Ta|lent in Latin;
 But was fore|ly put to't | in the Midst | of a Verse,
 Because | he could find | no Word | to come pat in.

Here you observe that the third Foot of the last Line is imperfect by one Time, or a short Syllable is wanting to compleat it. To compensate which the Voice is obliged to rest so much longer on the preceeding Syllable [*find*]. It is therefore an undoubted defect in the Measure; which might be mended thus

Because | he could find | not a Word | to come pat in.

Here also you may further observe, that the first Foot of the first Line [*Once*] is defective by two short Syllables; which is a Liberty seldom taken.

(6.) There is another kind of Metre in Anapaestic Verse that is sometimes used, and that is, when each Stanza consists of six Lines, the third and last containing each of them three Feet, and corresponding with a double Rhyme, the other four containing two Feet each with immediate Rhyme, *e. g.*

Since con|jugal Passion
 Is come | into Fashion,

And

And Mar|riage so blest | on the Throne is,

Like Ve|nus I'll shine,

Be fond | and be fine,

And Sir Truf|ty shall be | my Adonis.

(7.) But after all, this Measure, which I have hitherto called, and reduced as *Anapæstic*, may perhaps with equal reason be called (and with equal ease reduced to) the *Dactylic* Measure; by only beginning the Foot at the first long Quantity, and joining the long Syllable at the end of the Line to the short Syllables that begin the ensuing, to compleat the Dactylic Foot. *e. g.*

What | tho' I have | skill to com|plain,

And the | Muses my | Temples have | crown'd ?

What | tho' when they | hear my soft | Strain,

The | Sisters sit | weeping a|round ?

Ab | Colin 'tis | all but in | vain

Thy | Pipe and thy | Lawrel re|sign ;

Thy | fair one in|clines to a | Swain

Whose | Musick is | sweeter than | thine.

And indeed this Measure must be thus reduced when set to Musick, in order to have the Hand or

K

Foot

Foot down at the long Syllables, and when the Bar begins, as it always ought. *e. g.*



My | Time, O ye | Muses, was | happily | spent, when | Phœbe went
Ten | thousand soft | Pleasures I | found in my | Breast, sure | never fond



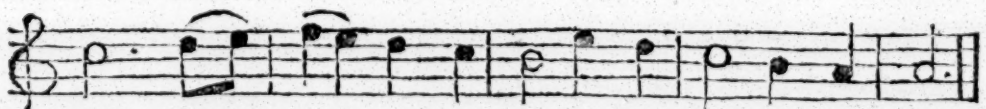
with me where|ever I | went. But | now she is | gone and hath
Shepherd like | Colin was | blest.



left me be|hind, what a | wonderful | change on a | sudden I | find!



when | things were as | fine as could | possibly | be, I | tho't 'twas the



Spring, I | tho't 'twas the | Spring, but a|las! it was | she

(8.) As this Dactylic Measure is confined to one kind of Number, and that consisting of two equal Parts, it ought most regularly to be set to that kind of Musick whose Movement corresponds with that of the Numbers ; that is, to Tunes of common Time, whose

whose Bars consist of two equal Parts : as in the Instance just above. However we often find it set to Tunes of triple Time, whose Bars consist of three equal Parts ; which, though it does not give a proper length of Time to the first Syllable of the Foot, (which ought naturally to be held as long as the other two) yet the Hand being down at the beginning of the Bar, and consequently a strong Emphasis falling on the first Part of the Foot ; this compensates for that defect of Time, sufficiently distinguishes the Sense of the Words, and makes the Movements of the musical Notes and poetical Numbers very well accord. *e. g.*



Despairing beside a still Stream, poor Colin forsaken was laid ;



And whilst a false Nymph was his Theme, a Willow supported his Head.



The Winds that blew over the Plain, with a Sigh to his Sighs did reply,



And the Brooks in return of his Pain, ran mournfully murmuring by.

So much for the three different Measures of which the English Poetry consists ; to one or other of which
(however

(however various be the Metre) almost all kinds of English Verse may be reduced. And some Odes designed for Musick (in order to diversify the Harmony) introduce them all (*b*).

I shall trouble the Reader with no further Particulars. What hath been said, I hope, will give him a distinct Idea, though not a perfect Knowledge of (what hath been so little attended to) *the Power of Numbers, and the Principles of Harmony in Poetic Compositions.* Which was the Design of this Essay.

(*b*) It were beside my Design to speak here particularly of the several sorts of English Poetry, as divided into *Heroic, Pastoral, Elegy, Satire, Comedy, Tragedy, Epigram* and *Lyric*. Let it suffice to observe that their distinguishing Characters are these; of *Heroic, Gravity*; of *Pastoral, Simplicity*; of *Elegy, Tendernefs*; of *Satire, Sharpnefs*; of *Comedy, Humour*; of *Tragedy, Pathos*; of *Epigram, Point*; and of *Lyric, Sweetnefs*.

F I N I S.



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13

APPROXIMATE

THESE ARE THE RESULTS OF THE
ANALYSIS OF THE SAMPLES
OF SOILS TAKEN AT THE

STATION

